

11-14-1997

Trends. Globalization and the Ugly American: "Fast-Track", Cuba, Libya, and Iran

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Recommended Citation

Editor (1997) "Trends. Globalization and the Ugly American: "Fast-Track", Cuba, Libya, and Iran," *International Bulletin of Political Psychology*. Vol. 3 : Iss. 16 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol3/iss16/5>

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International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Title: Trends. Globalization and the Ugly American: "Fast-Track", Cuba, Libya, and Iran

Author: Editor

Volume: 3

Issue: 16

Date: 1997-11-14

Keywords: Globalization, Americans, Ugliness, Values, Conflict, Economics

One rather poetic if mundane analogy for the consequences of globalization is that of the butterfly flying and creating perturbations throughout the world. One perturbation may be a rise in salience of the Ugly American.

In an era where there are purported interdependencies everywhere one looks, a majority of members of the United States (US) House of Representatives have said "no" to granting "fast-track" authority--that would have allowed the President and executive staff to negotiate trade treaties that Congress could vote up or down, but without amendments or modifications. One rationale for saying "no" was that in the name of fair competition other countries need to make their labor and environmental policies, regulations, and conditions more in line with those of the US.

Within the recent past, the US President and the Congress have collaborated on legislation--Helms-Burton, Iran-Libya Sanctions--that penalizes foreign companies and governments that engage in specified trade and economic transactions with Cuba, Libya, and Iran. The US executive and legislative branches also have collaborated on policies, laws, programs, and other exemplars of punishment and psychological omission training towards countries that have different views on human rights, ultimate causes of illicit drug trafficking and terrorism, population control, and free trade.

Supporters of these actions may state that their purpose is to induce a golden age of freedom, peace, liberty, prosperity, and goodness throughout the world. Opponents may instead point to imperialism, hegemony, and an obtuse insensitivity to other political, cultural, and social traditions. In the post-Cold War world of globalization, the sociologist Samuel Huntington may be correct. The next significant threat of military conflagration may be triggered largely via a conflict in values. And US citizens--whether in Pakistan or elsewhere--may be more at risk than ever before. (See Four Americans and Pakistani driver killed by Gunmen in Karachi. (November 12, 1997). The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Hashimoto, Y. (1979). Analysis of ego boundary: A study on the Rorschach Boundary Scores. Japanese Journal of Psychology, 50, 203-210; Huntington, S. (1996). The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order. NY: Simon & Schuster; James, M. (1986). Diagnosis and treatment of ego state boundary problems. Transactional Analysis Journal, 16, 188-196; Lerner, H., Sugarman, A., & Barbour, C. G. (1985). Patterns of ego boundary disturbance in neurotic, borderline, and schizophrenic patients. Psychoanalytic Psychology, 2, 47-66; Polster, S. (1983). Ego boundary as process: A systemic-contextual approach. Psychiatry, 46, 247-258; Sanger, D. E. (November 12, 1997). Abortion Issue imperils U.S. payment to I.M.F. The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Schiff, E.W. (1974). Symbiosis illustrated by egograms. Transactional Analysis Journal, 4, 13-15.)